

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

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E.O. 11652: N/

TAGS: ECON, PINT,KE,SU

SUBJECT: SUDAN-KENYA TALKS CONCERNING CLOSER ECONOMIC TIES

1. GOK MINISTERIAL DELEGATION LED BY FON MIN WAIYAKI RETURNED TO KENYA MARCH 8 FROM THREEE-DAY TALKS WITH SUDANESE AUTHORITIES, DURING WHICH PARTICIPANTS EXPLORED WAYS OF IMPLEMENTING DESIRE OF BOTH COUNTRIES FOR CLOSER RELATIONS.

2. IN AIRPORT PRESS BRIEFING WAIYAKI ANNOUNCED THAT DISCUSSIONS FOCUSSED ON DIRECT TRANSPORTATION LINKS BETWEEN KENYA AND SUDAN. ACCORDING FON MIN, GOVERNMENTS AGREED TO START WORK ON ROAD FROM KITALE, KENYA TO JUBA, SUDAN THROUGH LODWAR. HEALTH, VETERINARY, AND TOURISM PROJECTS WOULD ALSO BE UNDERTAKEN NEAR BORDER. WAIYAKI ADDED THAT DIRECT TELEPHONE LINK AND NEW RAILWAY LINE WERE ALSO PLANNED. LATTER, HE ANTICIPATED, WOULD BE LONG TERM PROJECT TO BE INITIATED AFTER COMPLETION OF FEASIBILITY STUDY.

3. DELEGATIONS AGREED ON BROAD EXCHANGE PROGRAM COVERING IRRIGATION TECHNICIANS, UNIVERSITY STUDENTS, AND HEALTH

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WORKERS.

4. COMMENT. GOK-GOS DISCUSSIONS ARE PARTICULARLY INTERESTING IN LIGHT OF RECENTLY SOURED KENYA-UGANDA RELATIONS. IN FACT, WAIYAKI'S BRIEFING POINTED OUT THAT CONTEMPLATED ROAD/RAIL TIES WOULD BY PASS UGANDA AND ASSURE SUDAN CONTINUED ACCESS TO PORT OF MOMBASA. IN EFFORT TO EMPHASIZE INCREASING CORDIALITY OF GOK-GOS RELATIONS, DELEGATIONS RESURRECTED MUCH-PUBLICIZED KITALE-JUBA ROAD PROJECT, WHICH HAS PROGRESSED LITTLE BEYOND THE DISCUSSION STAGE FOR THE LAST FIVE YEARS. SOUTHERN SUDAN AND NORTHERN KENYA ARE CURRENTLY CONNECTED BY ROADWAY THROUGH NORTHEASTERN UGANDA. ACCORDING LOCAL SOURCES, MINISTRY OF WORKS IS NOW CONSTRUCTING KITALE-LODWA PORTION OF WHAT COULD LATER DEVELOP INTO MAJOR SUDAN-KENYA HIGHWAY. IMPROVED TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES WOULD BE BOON TO NORTHWESTERN KENYA AREA WHICH IS SITE OF SEVERAL AFRICA INLAND MISSION DEVELOPMENT OF SOUTHERN SUDAN PLACES INCREASING IMPORTANCE ON ACCES TO EAST AFRICAN MARKETS AND PORTS. NEVERTHELESS, BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS CLEARLY WENT BEYOND MUTUAL ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO REINFORCEMENT OF POLITICAL TIES.

MARSHALL

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